

FCR 1976-82

**Stillness
(SP & AO)**

Trying to be still is something we *can* do and we know we have to try to do it many times a day. We can learn a lot from Dr Roles's papers in our period of study, which show an increasing understanding of the process of becoming still and the need for stillness. In 1976, speaking of the three degrees of stillness, Dr Roles cited HH's teaching of the three kinds of rest given to the School of Meditation:

There are three types of rest: the bodily rest of the physical realm, the mental rest of the subtle realm, and the Spiritual rest of the causal realm. As far as the physical realm is concerned, everyone knows that after a full day's work one must get rest during the night. Even after exertion during the day one must stop to rest and gain energy to start again. Most people know about it, although not everyone knows the art of physical rest.

The rest at the subtle level appears between the end of fulfilment of one desire and initiation of the next desire. This is the state of non-desire which provides rest of the subtle level. One stops all hankering, and the thinking process comes to stillness. The rest at the Spiritual or causal level is available when all activities of the physical and subtle body – the desires, the thinking process and even the feelings and emotions - are stilled. The body, Manas, Buddhi, and Chitta are all stilled. Buddhi and Chitta at the causal level are the ultimate initiators of all activity, and when complete satisfaction with everything and every situation is materialised and there is no hankering after any further need, then one gets the rest of the Spiritual realm. In that rest the Atman appears, as the sole witness, in its luminous glory; and observes the great stillness of the whole universe as one single unit where there is no play of physical movement, mental movement, or even emotional movement. This could be described as 'complete surrender', or 'complete faith in the Will of the Absolute'. One simply accepts everything without any rejection or opposition. These are the three (types or) levels of rest which the School should provide for its members according to the varying needs of individuals [*Record* 9.11.73]

Dr Roles noted that the challenge, as ever, is to carry the stillness with us when we start to move – 'Bang goes the Stillness!' (76/22). But when there is control of the 'moving centre' or Manas, then it is possible to carry that stillness around with us all day. He suggested that undertaking physical work with attention can help with this, and this is something to try.

But what is control of the moving centre? What does it feel like? How do you get it? Is that part of the purpose of the Movements and the Turning (and indeed the Work Party)?

It might be relevant to remember what Iain MacGilchrist wrote about the two hemispheres: that the right (inward looking) hemisphere attends to the left (outward looking) hemisphere but the left hemisphere attends only to the illusion it has created. That may help to explain why the outside world, the body, has to be stilled for the mind (taken as the left hemisphere) to be stilled,

and the mind has to be stilled before the 'soul' (the right hemisphere) can be stilled? And is the sequence reversed for a realised man?

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In 1978 Dr Roles had been ill for four months when he returned to the idea of Stillness. He said that in dealing with pain he had discovered the great help that deep stillness can give. He also said that these are the two most profitable ideas to carry about with one:

I have nothing of my own, and that meditation and the ultimate end of Self-realization lies in the stillness, complete stillness. [78/24]

As for the point of stillness:

. . . the moment is our only connection with the Divine Self Who does things for us. There is no time for the Param-Atman or the Atman and, therefore, He is always in the present moment. We are far away in the past or the future, so we never benefit. If we come to ourselves in the moment, then He will do what is necessary to be done. If we could really understand and believe and practice that, life would be altogether different.

As Aldous Huxley wrote in *Perennial Philosophy*:

The present moment is the only aperture through which the soul can pass out of time into eternity, through which grace can pass out of eternity into the soul . . .

Dr Roles said that since the Causal level cannot be described, one learns about it from its effects on the activities and dispositions of such men and women who provide themselves with spiritual rest. We are told by HH that such men and women show love and affection towards everything they encounter.

Their intentions will be pure and simple. Purity and simplicity widen the horizon and they work for the whole of humanity and through the natural Laws.

The physical movement of such people is geared to natural rhythm and the result is economy of movement.

So everything they do will emerge from Stillness, be held in Stillness and return to Stillness. [Record 9.11.73]

Dr Roles added:

As Mr O said 'The only effort is not to make effort!' and stillness and the appropriate energy will bring about 'the memory of what you promised yourself.'

In 1980 someone asked, in relation to meditation,

Q. What part of me is it that seems frightened of the Stillness?"

Dr R. It is the moving part (Manas). All our education is associated with the outer mind. When confronted with the inner world it can't interpret the data. Can't express

what it experiences and so is frightened. As HH said [9.11.73], stillness is the aim and meditation is the means. [80/15]

Or as HH said

A market is a place of movement where buying, selling and bargaining create a din. All over people talk and buzz around. When one is proceeding towards the market one can hear its noise and its din and one knows that the din is there and stillness is here. As one proceeds the din becomes louder and the sound of silence seems to disappear and is lost in the market din. When inside the market there is participation in the din and the silence or stillness is lost. One becomes the market and the stillness is gone. No sooner one comes out of the market one can appreciate the noise there and stillness here. This is the usual way of life. Discipline helps to hear the noise and also the silence in the middle of the market. If one maintains the stillness, then one does not become the market although participating in it. [*Record 23.1.80*]

This brings us back full circle to 'how do you maintain the silence?'

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